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While expansion talks are on hold for the Buffalo Creek Reservoir near Buffalo Grove and Long Grove, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District is now focusing on Wheeling's Heritage Park for a possible large-scale flood-control basin to stop the seemingly annual Des Plaines River flooding.

Even though the Wheeling Park District is currently immersed in a major overhaul project for Heritage Park, Matt Wehby, park district community relations manager, said the reclamation district has scouted the property and has had discussions with park leaders. The park district was scheduled to release the final Heritage Park redesign draft Tuesday evening, after the Countryside's print deadline.

"We made it clear that we are redesigning Heritage Park," Wehby said. "Any detention would have to work within our new design frameworks."

However, state and local leaders have pressured the reclamation district and the Lake County Forest Preserve District to resume negotiations to expand and build a new reservoir at the existing forest preserve reservoir, on the northwest corner of Lake-Cook and Arlington Heights roads.

Earlier this month, a frustrated U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, R-10th, called on the reclamation district and Lake County to get together and hammer out an intergovernmental deal to expand the Buffalo Creek Reservoir.

However, Joseph Sobanski, chief engineer for the reclamation district, said negotiations with Lake County are suspended because the cost to build in the forest preserve is too high.

Now, Sobanski said other options -- predominately Heritage Park and potentially even Wheeling Acting Village President Pat Horcher's family farm between Buffalo Grove Road and state

Route 83 -- are under review. The cost to build the project in Wheeling would be approximately \$35 million, instead of the proposed \$47 million plan preferred by the Lake County Forest Preserve, Sobanski said.

The detention project is designed to attenuate flooding in the towns along the Des Plaines River. However, as the project site moves away from the existing Buffalo Creek Reservoir to the east and further downstream, fewer communities, including Long Grove and Buffalo Grove, can benefit.

"I prefer Buffalo Creek because the original plan included a lot of prairie and open space amenities while still providing the full range of flood protection," Kirk said. "The only incorrect answer is not building any flood control system."

Kirk told the water reclamation district that he wants a solution by Aug. 7.

"They need to rap it up with Wheeling or we need to go back to Lake County," Kirk said. "This project is absolutely essential."